What the Oxford Conference of 1937 may mean for the Life of the Church

A Paper
Prepared

by

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of

THE UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL
FOR LIFE AND WORK

for the use of
the American delegates

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I. THE REASONS FOR HOLDING THE OXFORD CONFERENCE

1. The reasons for holding the Oxford Conference have been so fully explained in the material which has already been sent you that it is not necessary to restate them here.[1] It will be sufficient to recall the following facts, which are the immediate occasion of the Conference. These facts have to do partly with the world situation which confronts the Church, partly with conditions in the Church itself.

2. The first group of factors include the following:

a. The increasing tension of the world situation, with its threat of social revolution and of war. A recently published report shows that the twentieth century has been thus far the bloodiest century in all world history. On the basis of the record to date the average man has 6500 times as much chance of being killed in warfare as he had in the thirteenth century.

b. The growing power of the State and its increasing demand upon man's allegiance. While this phenomenon is world-wide and may be observed even in countries with democratic constitutions and traditions like England and the United States, it assumes its most serious proportions in countries like Germany, Italy, Russia, and Japan, where the demands made upon the citizen extend to every aspect of his intellectual and spiritual, as well as of his economic and political life.

c. The theoretical justification of this claim to unquestioning loyalty by new philosophies — Communism (with its rationalistic and universalistic faith) and National Socialism (with its mystical foundation in soil, blood, and race). These because of their appeal to the emotions as well as the intellect have all the characteristics of rival religions.

d. The attack upon hitherto accepted methods of procedure, both in politics and in economics: and this both within the individual nation (the inability of parliamentary institutions to reach quick decisions) and in the international field (the breakdown of machinery for international conciliation set up by the League of Nations).

3. The second group of facts include the following:

a. The increased sensitiveness of Christians to social issues, with a corresponding increase of activity by the churches in fields hitherto preempted by the State (e.g., conditions of labor, control of commerce and manufacture, the plight of the farmer, the question of military service, etc.).

b. In particular, the conviction on the part of many Christians that with the breakdown of all other agencies for the maintenance of national goodwill and peace, the Church as an international society

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[1] See especially the pamphlet on *Church, Community, and State: A World Issue,* which has been prepared by Dr J. H. Oldham, Chairman of the Research Department of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work.

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committed by its religious faith to believe in universal brotherhood has an inescapable responsibility.

c. The fact that the Church in its present divided condition is not in a position to deal effectively with the situation which confronts it either (1) in the world of thought (since Christians do not agree as to the nature and extent of the Church's social responsibility) or (2) in the field of action (because the Church in its present divided condition cannot act effectively even in the region of agreement). This, true of the Church in general, is particularly true of the non-Roman churches which have no adequate agency for cooperative thinking and acting on a world-wide scale.

4. This situation is the reason for the calling of the Oxford Conference. It is clear that if the non-Roman churches are to deal adequately with the crisis they are facing there are two things which they must do:

a. They must see more clearly than they now do what are the major convictions as to man's social nature and responsibility which differentiate the Christian view of life in all its forms from those which oppose it.

b. They must find ways of acting together where those vital interests are challenged.

The Oxford Conference has been called to make it possible for representative Christians to take counsel as to the ways in which these essential aims can be attained.

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II. ITS PROGRAM AND PROCEDURE

1. To appreciate what fairly may be expected from the Oxford Conference we must put it in its setting as part of a long-time program through which the churches of the world are trying to come to clarity as to their common duty and to fit themselves adequately to discharge it. There are many agencies cooperating in this program. The Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, which is primarily responsible for the holding of the Oxford Conference, is one. The World Conference on Faith and Order is another. Other branches of the ecumenical movement are the International Missionary Council, the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches, and the various forms of the youth movement (e.g., The World Student Christian Federation and the International Y.M. and Y.W.C.A.). All these movements are dealing in one way or another with the central issues with which Oxford will be occupied. All of them have joined in a Consultative Committee to discuss their several programs and discover the means and methods of most effective cooperation. These programs include, besides the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences, no less than five other world conferences of world Christian organizations in the space of three years. Among

these special importance attaches to the conference of the International Missionary Council to be held at Hangchow in 1938, and the Youth Conference to be held in Europe in 1939. The former will make possible the attendance of representatives of the younger churches of the Far East on a scale not possible at Oxford. The latter will bring together for the first time the representatives of all the Christian youth organizations operating in the international field to take counsel concerning the vital issues which confront the churches. The Oxford Conference will help to formulate the issues which this latter conference will consider. It should help us to see clearly the point to which we have come in our effort to define the social responsibility of the churches and to chart the next steps that need to be taken in its application.

2. The documents already distributed to the delegates have given a general description of the constitution of the Conference, of its program, and of the procedure. Here it is sufficient to recall the fact that

a. The Conference is an official conference in the sense that the great majority of the delegates have been appointed by the highest authorities of the cooperating churches. Of the 400 places for delegates one hundred have been reserved for the cooption of those who have been most active in the preparation or who can on other counts contribute special knowledge to the discussions. In addition to the 400 delegates there will be 400 associates, who will be admitted to all the public meetings. Among these 100 places will be reserved for carefully chosen representatives of youth organizations.

b. While in its ideal the Conference is ecumenical in the sense of being world-wide, there have been some necessary limitations in attendance. The Roman Catholics will not be represented. Of the larger American communions all but two or three will send delegates. The delegation from the Far East will necessarily be small. This will be true also of the representations of youth and of women. But these limitations will, it is hoped, be measurably overcome in succeeding conferences.

c. The President of the Conference will be the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Chairman of the British Section, who will be assisted by the Presidents of the other Sections: Archbishop Germanos, representing the Ecumenical Patriarch, President of the Orthodox Section; Dr. Boegner, Acting President of the Continental Section; Dr. William Adams Brown, President of the American Section; and the Bishop of Dornekal, President of the Fifth Section.

d. After opening addresses on the preparation for the Conference and the situation which confronts the Church, the Conference will organize in five Sections. The First Section, with Sir Walter Moberly as Chairman, will have for its subject CHURCH AND COMMUNITY. The Second, with Dr. Max Huber as Chairman, will have for its subject CHURCH AND STATE. The Third, with Professor John Maud as Chairman, will have for its subject CHURCH,

COMMUNITY, and STATE IN RELATION TO THE ECONOMIC ORDER. The Fourth Section, with President Henry Sloane Coffin as Chairman, will have for its subject CHURCH, COMMUNITY, AND STATE IN RELATION TO EDUCATION. The Fifth Section, with President John Mackay as Chairman, will have for its subject THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AND A WORLD OF NATIONS. Provision will be made in connection with Section V for a special Subsection on CHRISTIANITY AND WAR, of which Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft will be Chairman. The Sections will meet separately and when they are ready will report their findings to the Conference as a whole, which will deal with them as it sees fit. Draft reports of these Sections are being sent in advance to delegates for their careful consideration.

e. One of the functions of the Conference will be to hear a report from a committee of thirty-five representative Christians appointed by the Consultative Committee already referred to on the future of the ecumenical movement. This will deal with such subjects as the relation of the different parts of the ecumenical movement to one another and will present recommendations which if approved may be forwarded to the churches for their consideration and possible action.

f. There will be a Business Committee, of which Dr. John R. Mott will be Chairman and of which the Presidents of the Sections and the Chairmen of the Commissions will be members. This Committee will be in charge of the business of the Conference and be responsible for the preparation of such findings as may be deemed practicable and desirable.

g. Much attention has been given to the preparation for the devotional aspects of the Conference, of which due notice will be given at the proper time.

h. Associates of the Conference, although not included in the Sections (Commissions) because of their already unwieldy size and the necessity of restricting participation to the official delegates of the churches, are to attend all plenary sessions. While the Sections meet the associates are, it is expected, to meet in national, regional, and in some cases, denominational groups to consider and formulate ways of making effective in the life of the churches the fruits of the Oxford Conference as a whole. Their service in interpreting the Conference, in writing, preaching, teaching, and lecturing may easily prove of major importance to the lands from which they come.

i. Youth associates, having been selected with great care in order to represent a cross section of the organized Christian youth of the world, will attend the general sessions and at certain times will meet by themselves under the auspices of the Joint Youth Commission of the Universal Christian Council and the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches to consider the special problems and functions of their respective parts of the Church Universal. Particular study and forethought has been given to this part of

the undertaking in view of the fact that these youth leaders will in many cases have a direct responsibility for the planning and developing of the World Conference of Christian Youth to be held in 1939.

j. Wives of delegates will have the status of associates and will have places provided for them on similar conditions.

k. The registration fee for delegates and co-opted delegates is $7.50; for associates and wives of delegates, $5.00; for youth associates, $2.50. An amount of $2.50 of the registration fee paid by delegates will pay for the book by Drs. Oldham and Visser 't Hooft on "The Church and Its Function in Society," together with the five memoranda of the Section Chairmen. Associates, youth associates, and wives of delegates may also secure this material by the payment of an additional $2.50.

III. SOME ISSUES WITH WHICH THE CONFERENCE MUST DEAL

1. The program of the Conference has been determined by the nature of the issues with which the present world situation confronts the Church. These issues, as we have seen, lie partly in the field of theory, partly in that of application. The first have to do with the place of the Church in man's total social life and in particular with its relations to the other institutions through which that life finds expression: the family, the school, the economic order, the institutions of art and culture, the nation, and more particularly the State. The second have to do with various practical matters which grow out of these relations, notably in the field of economics, of education, and of international relationships.

The Sections have been organized so as to deal most effectively with these issues.

2. The First Section has for its subject CHURCH and COMMUNITY. It will deal with such questions as these: the relation of the organized Church to the society of which it forms a part; the extent to which it is dependent upon the forces—historical, cultural, intellectual, economic, political—which affect the nature of communal life; and particularly of that unique form of social organism which the English-speaking peoples call "the nation" and the Germans "Das Volk." It will explore the various attitudes which Christians have taken toward these relations in the past, and particularly the question of how far it is the duty of the Church to compromise with existing customs for the sake of maintaining contact with the largest number of persons (the "church ideal" in Troeltsch's definition of the "Church"), how far it should break with prevailing moral standards for the purpose of maintaining the purity of its own life (the "sect

ideal"). This will require a discussion of the different meanings of the word "Church," e.g., the Church as institution (the local congregation, the communion, the church nationally established) and as spiritual society (the Church Universal, the "Una Sancta," the communion of saints).

Among the issues which the Section must face are these:

a. How far is the Church as an institution responsible (1) for setting social and political standards; (2) for educating its members in the meaning and application of those standards; (3) for exercising direct political influence where they are violated?

b. In what way should this influence be exercised? What should be the attitude of the Church to the individuals and groups who differ from the position of the majority within the Church and feel it their duty to agitate for change?

c. What in particular is the responsibility of the clergy as distinct from the laity, of the local congregation as distinct from the communion, of the churches within the nation as distinct from the Church Universal?

3. The Second Section has for its subject the relation of CHURCH AND STATE. In the light of the various conceptions of the relation of Church and State which have emerged in the course of history and the differing philosophies which they presuppose, the Section will attempt to differentiate the problems presented to the Church in different countries. In particular it will point out the different problems presented to the Church in (a) countries like Russia and Germany, where the State demands unquestioning allegiance to its own philosophy; (b) countries like Great Britain, where an established church and free churches exist side by side; (c) countries like the United States, where in the eyes of the government all churches are voluntary societies and the government as such assumes no responsibility either for the maintenance or the teaching of religion; (d) countries like India, China, and Japan, where the Christian Church is a minority group dependent for its support in large measure upon bodies living under other governments.

Among the issues with which the Section will deal are these:

a. What convictions as to the nature and function of the State do Christians hold in common, and wherein do they differ?

b. What problems are presented to the Church in countries where there is an establishment of religion which are not present in countries where churches are in the eyes of the law voluntary self-governing societies and vice versa?

c. In what ways and to what extent can Christians who differ in their theoretical view of the proper relation of Church and State cooperate through organizations like the Universal Christian Council in bringing Christian convictions to bear upon the formation of national or international policy?

d. In what ways can Christians who enjoy freedom to practice and propagate their religion assist their fellow Christians in countries where such liberty is denied or curtailed?

e. At what point does resistance to the State become a Christian duty?

4. The subject of Section III is CHURCH, COMMUNITY, AND STATE IN RELATION TO ECONOMICS. Here we pass from the realm of theory to that of practical application. For it is in connection with matters like economics, politics, and the control of education that the questions at issue between Church and State come to a head. Section III will consider the changes which have been brought about in the economic life of modern man by the increased power of the machine and its effects on technological unemployment; more especially the moral and spiritual consequences of this growing specialization of labor, partly on the workers in loss of interest in their work, partly on the unemployed in the impairment of their morale. It will consider the various plans by which it is proposed to deal with these evils and the attitude of the Church to the issues they raise. It will deal in particular with such questions as the Christian view of property, the Christian attitude toward work, and the consequences that follow for the administration of the Church's own affairs as a corporation administering property under the laws of a capitalistic society.

Among the issues with which the Section will deal are these:

a) What is the responsibility of the Church in the economic sphere (1) for setting standards for the community, (2) for applying these standards to the conduct of its own affairs, (3) for working for change in the laws or in their enforcement?

b) What are the factors to be considered in determining this responsibility, e.g., the concrete economic situation in one or more countries or on a world scale, the social forces bringing about economic change, competing economic systems, movements like Communism and Fascism with a definite economic philosophy?

c) What are the standards which determine the Church's responsibility, e.g., economic teaching implicit in the Bible or in Christian tradition, historic relationships which have developed between the Church and the economic environment; practical experience in connection with concrete economic problems, with political movements, with individual parish experience?

d) How may these principles be applied in a particular community or denomination to such matters as the salaries of ministers, the wages of employees, the administration of church funds, etc.?

e) How far and in what way should the churches feel responsibility for dealing with the economic inequalities between nations which unless remedied may lead to war?

5. The subject of Section IV is CHURCH, COMMUNITY, AND STATE IN RELATION TO EDUCATION. Here, besides the

home and the Church, the permanent factors in religious education, two other institutions require consideration: the State, and the privately controlled school, college, and university. Each raises problems which require the attention of Christians. So far as the State is concerned, the problem is two-fold: (a) where the State assumes responsibility for religious education to see that the instruction given is adequate and trustworthy; (b) where the State refuses that responsibility to inquire how the Church may discharge it in the most effective way.

So far as the State is concerned this problem, always a pressing one, has been rendered more acute by the fact that in our own day the State has been an educator to an extent unparalleled in previous history. And this not simply in the narrow sense of the term to denote formal instruction given in school and university but in the sense that the State, through its control of, or where that is not true its access to, the organs of public opinion, the press, and the radio, exercises a continuous influence upon the thinking of the people.

Among the issues with which the Section will deal are these:

a) What is the responsibility of the Church as an educational institution (1) for the training of its own members, (2) in particular, for the education of youth, (3) for the education of public opinion in the community? What agencies are available for this education (1) in the schools, (2) in the local church, (3) in the denomination, (4) in the community?

b) How far are these agencies being effectively used? In what way and to what extent can the Church secure the teaching of religion in schools and colleges either privately maintained or state supported? How far is cooperation between Catholics, Protestants, and Jews in public education possible?

6. Section V will deal with THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AND A WORLD OF NATIONS. It will consider the situation facing the nations because of the unrestricted working of the principle of national sovereignty, and it will raise the question of what is the responsibility of the Church in the face of the international anarchy which is its inevitable result. It will point out the causes of international tension in the selfish rivalry of individuals and groups within each nation and analyze the psychological motives upon which it feeds. It will show how, in their effort to rally their citizens to the support of the prevailing national policy, the leaders of the totalitarian state appeal to motives in themselves worthy (e.g., love of country, capacity for sacrifice, loyalty to a cause greater than self). It will ask what the Church can do more than it is now doing to direct these motives to nobler ends and substitute for the nation as the supreme object of loyalty God and his purpose for the world. Above all, it will call attention to the unique contribution which the Church can make to the cause of world understanding and good will by the fact that it is itself a world-wide society transcending all limitations of nation or class.

Further, the Section, through its special Subsection on CHRISTIANITY AND WAR, will consider the problems presented to the Church by the present competition of armaments and the threat of war. It will consider the different attitudes taken by different bodies of Christians toward personal participation in war and the different questions which these attitudes raise.

Among the issues with which the Section will deal are the following:

a) How can the Church contribute to better relations between nations? What bearing has the movement for Christian unity upon international understanding and goodwill? What should be the attitude of the Church toward the questions raised in connection with war and peace (e.g., the question of the conscientious objector, of the economic boycott, of the chaplaincy, etc.)? How far may statements such as that on pp. 275-278 in *Church and State in Contemporary America* furnish a satisfactory basis for a consistent Christian policy?

Any thoroughgoing discussion of the questions thus outlined will make it clear that their complete answer cannot be given by the Oxford Conference alone. All raise issues concerning the nature of the Church and its constitution which fall properly within the scope of our sister Conference on Faith and Order. It is important, therefore, that before adjournment the Oxford Conference should consider how far the Church as at present organized is in a position to act effectively in matters on which there is agreement, and where that is not the case what changes are necessary to make such common action possible. The conclusions reached on these subjects should then be forwarded to our sister conference at Edinburgh for such consideration as it may feel able to give to them.

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IV. DANGERS TO BE AVOIDED AND AIMS TO BE ACHIEVED

1. It is clear from this brief survey that the questions with which the Oxford Conference will be called upon to deal are not only inherently difficult but present very different problems to the different national groups who will unite for their consideration. Two dangers need to be guarded against: (a) That in our effort to do justice to the differences that separate us we may fail to give clear expression to the convictions that unite us. (b) That in our desire to find some common ground with those whose situation differs widely from our own we may overlook or minimize those special responsibilities which rest upon us as members of the American churches for taking such action as it is in our power to take.

2. It will help us to guard against these dangers if in all our discussions we keep constantly in mind the following distinctions: (a) Between those issues which are matters of life and death for the Church

and those which are questions of practical expediency. (b) Between those issues which are theoretical merely and those which bear immediately upon present duty. (c) Between those issues which affect our own country or section of the Church exclusively and those which concern the Church as a whole. (d) Between those things that can be done now and those in which action must be postponed to the longer future. (e) Between those things which the churches can do alone and those for which they need the cooperation of other social agencies and, in the last analysis, of the State.

3. Five things among others we may reasonably set before ourselves as aims to be accomplished.

a. A clearer definition of the convictions which unite Christians in the field of social ethics and which differentiate their world view from that of the rival systems which oppose them.

b. A more sympathetic understanding of the differences which separate different groups, whether national or ecclesiastical, in their interpretation of the meaning of these convictions and the practical consequences which follow from them.

c. The formulation of definite suggestions for action within the fields of agreement which may be recommended to the cooperating churches with such modifications as the differing national and ecclesiastical conditions may make necessary.

d. The provision for such common study and experiment in the field of disagreement as may remove present causes of misunderstanding and make larger cooperation possible in the future.

e. The recommendation to the cooperating churches of such practical measures, including the provision or strengthening of the needed agencies of cooperation as will make "c" and "d" possible.

It is with the last objective that the report of the Committee of Thirty-five will be concerned. It will be its function to consider in what ways the various organizations which are concerned with aspects of the ecumenical movement can most effectively cooperate for common witness in the field of agreement and for common study and experiment in the field where agreement has not yet been reached: and what changes (if any) are needed in their organization and policy to make this cooperation practicable.

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V. WHAT AMERICANS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE CONFERENCE

1. It is clear from this analysis of issues that the questions before the Conference will fall into two groups: those which have to do with the clarification of the convictions which all Christians have in common; those which have to do with the different ways in which they must be applied to the differing situations and problems which confront different sections of the Church.

2. It is difficult to over-emphasize the importance of the first objective. In these days of passionate loyalty it is more than ever necessary that the witness of the Church to convictions it holds in trust for mankind should be clear and consistent. Our experience during the post-war years has taught us that this witness to be effective does not require agreement at all points. On the contrary it may be all the more impressive if borne by persons with differing historical tradition, differing philosophical presuppositions, and differing social and ecclesiastical organization. But it is essential that the things which are distinctive in the Christian Gospel and vital to its successful propagation should receive clear and confident expression.

3. This unity in essentials may however be consistent with a wide variety of interpretation and application, and here the different situations which different branches of the Church face must have a determining influence. The problem of the church in Germany today is different from that in the Scandinavian countries, of the church in Russia from that of the church in India, of the church in Britain from that of the churches in the United States. We shall best help one another to realize the things we have in common if in the field of our special responsibility we are true to the genius of our past history and present experience.

4. This presents the representatives of the American churches with a unique opportunity and lays upon them a special responsibility. As representatives of a country which for more than a century and a half has had no national establishment of religion while at the same time the attitude of the government has been friendly to Christianity, we have had the opportunity to explore more fully than the Christians of Europe the possibilities of a free church in a democratic state. While this situation presents our churches with exceptional privileges, it exposes them also to peculiar dangers. And both of these it must be our responsibility to report and to interpret. At the same time it is important for us to remember that the conditions under which the American churches have developed have not been characteristic of the life of the older churches. It must be our duty, therefore, while we share the experience and insight which has come to us in the course of our own history to enter sympathetically into the conditions under which our sister churches of different traditions have lived that we may on our part learn what that experience has to teach. Only through this mutual sharing of experience by men living under differing conditions can the witness of the Church as a whole be most effectively borne.

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VI. SOME SUGGESTIONS AS TO PREPARATION

1. Each delegate has already been assigned to a special Section, so far as possible according to his preference. It will be his responsibility to do what he can to make the report of the Section to which

he is assigned as complete, as objective, and as definite as possible. He will be helped in doing this if before reaching Oxford he uses to the full the preliminary material which will be furnished to him by the American Advisory Council.

This material will be of two kinds: (a) papers having to do with the topics which will come before the Conference as a whole; (b) papers specially relevant to the work of the Section to which each individual delegate has been assigned.

2. The material thus to be furnished to the delegates is itself part of a process of preparation which has been carried on over a period of several years under Dr. J. H. Oldham and his colleagues of the Research Department of the Universal Christian Council. This preparation has included the following:

a. Provision for a series of volumes dealing with the most important theoretical issues raised by the Conference. In the preparation of these volumes scholars from different countries have cooperated. They include not only the discussion of such subjects as the function of the Church, its relation to the Community and the State, and the conclusions which follow for the responsibility of the Church with reference to economics, education, and international affairs, but also such underlying theoretical issues as the Christian conception of man, the Christian view of history, and the Christian attitude toward social institutions.

While only one of these volumes is likely to appear before the Conference meets, namely, that of Dr. J. H. Oldhan and Dr. Visser 't Hooft on *The Church and Its Function in Society,* the documents used in the preparation of the others have been widely distributed and many of them will be made available for the delegates as explained below.

b. A second form of preparation has taken the form of a series of preliminary reports which have been drafted by the Chairmen of the five Sections for the use of the Sections when they meet. In order to give the papers which have been prepared representative character, drafts have been submitted for criticism to a number of different individuals of different ecclesiastical and theological backgrounds. It is important, however, to remember that these documents are in no sense official, still less final, but rather material which each Section can use, alter, or reject as it pleases.

It will assist the Chairmen of the Sections if before the Conference assembles each delegate will communicate to his own Chairman his views on the topics to be considered and any suggestions as to the ways in which they can be most effectively dealt with. To facilitate this process the American Advisory Council has asked the following persons to act as intermediaries:

Section I CHURCH AND COMMUNITY
Professor Edwin E. Aubrey
University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

Section II CHURCH AND STATE

Dr. William Adams Brown
3041 Broadway, New York City

Section III CHURCH, COMMUNITY, AND STATE IN RELATION TO THE ECONOMIC ORDER

Professor John C. Bennett, c/o Oldham
2 Eaton Gate, London, S.W. 1

Section IV CHURCH, COMMUNITY, AND STATE IN RELATION TO EDUCATION

Dr. Norman B. Nash
2 Phillips Place, Cambridge, Mass.

Section V (a) THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AND A WORLD OF NATIONS

Dr. Theodore A. Greene
33 Lexington Street, New Britain, Conn.

(b) CHRISTIANITY AND WAR

Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk
105 East 22nd Street, New York City

c. In addition to the documents which constitute what may be called the direct preparation for the Conference, there have been a number of volumes of unofficial character which traverse the field which the Conference will study and which are strongly recommended to the delegates for their reading. Among these may be mentioned:

Church and State on the European Continent by Adolf Keller
Christian Faith and the Modern State by Nils Ehrenström
Christianity in the Eastern Conflicts by William Paton

Of special importance for American delegates is the volume on *Church and State in Contemporary America,*[1] which sums up the result of a cooperative study carried on over a period of six years by a representative committee of American Christians appointed by the Federal Council of Churches. This volume will serve as a useful background for discussion not only because of the large amount of factual material which it contains, but also because at various points it formulates principles which may serve as a basis for profitable discussion. Cf. pp. 241 and 242 on the consensus of Protestantism; pp. 258-264 on the principles which control the political activity of the Church; and pp. 275-278 which attempts to formulate a state of the principle which should control the policy of the churches with reference to peace and war.

d. On the subject, vital to the success of the Conference, of the nature and function of the Christian Church, mention should be made

[1] Brown, Williams Adams, New York, 1936

of the reports[1] of the Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order, and of a book by the present writer, now being circulated by the Friends of Reunion on *The Church: Catholic and Protestant.*[2]

3. To promote interest in the Conference in wider circles and to facilitate general discussion, attention should be called to a small packet which can be purchased for $1.25, which contains the following booklets:

Christianity and Our World by John C. Bennett
Church Community and State: A World Issue by J. H. Oldham
Christ's Way and the World's by Henry Smith Leiper
Discussion Syllabus (for above book) by Henry Smith Leiper
The Church and the World Crisis (Study-outline) by Charles H. Corbett

4. More important than anything which can be done in the Conference itself is the responsibility of the delegates to see that its results are reported to the home churches and the recommendations which it may make are given respectful consideration. By whatever other tests we may measure the success of the Conference, on this at least we may be agreed, that it will render its most effective service in the measure that it fits the churches which in each geographical area constitute the natural basis for cooperative effort to unite for the more effective discharge of their social responsibility within that area and for cooperation with other similar units in the work as a whole. For this reason it is suggested that at some appropriate time before the conclusion of the Conference the American delegates meet to discuss their special responsibility to the home church both as it affects the local community, the denomination, and the nation as a whole.

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[1] i.e., 1. THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE
2. THE CHURCH AND THE WORD
3. THE CHURCH: ITS MINISTRY AND SACRAMENTS
4. THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH IN LIFE AND WORSHIP
   a. The Meanings of Unity
   b. The Communion of Saints
   c. The Non-theological Factors in the Making and Unmaking of Church Union
   d. A Decade of Objective Progress in Church Unity
   e. Next Steps on the Road to a United Church

[2] Brown, Williams Adams, New York, 1935

The Universal Christian Council for Life and Work
287 Fourth Avenue, New York